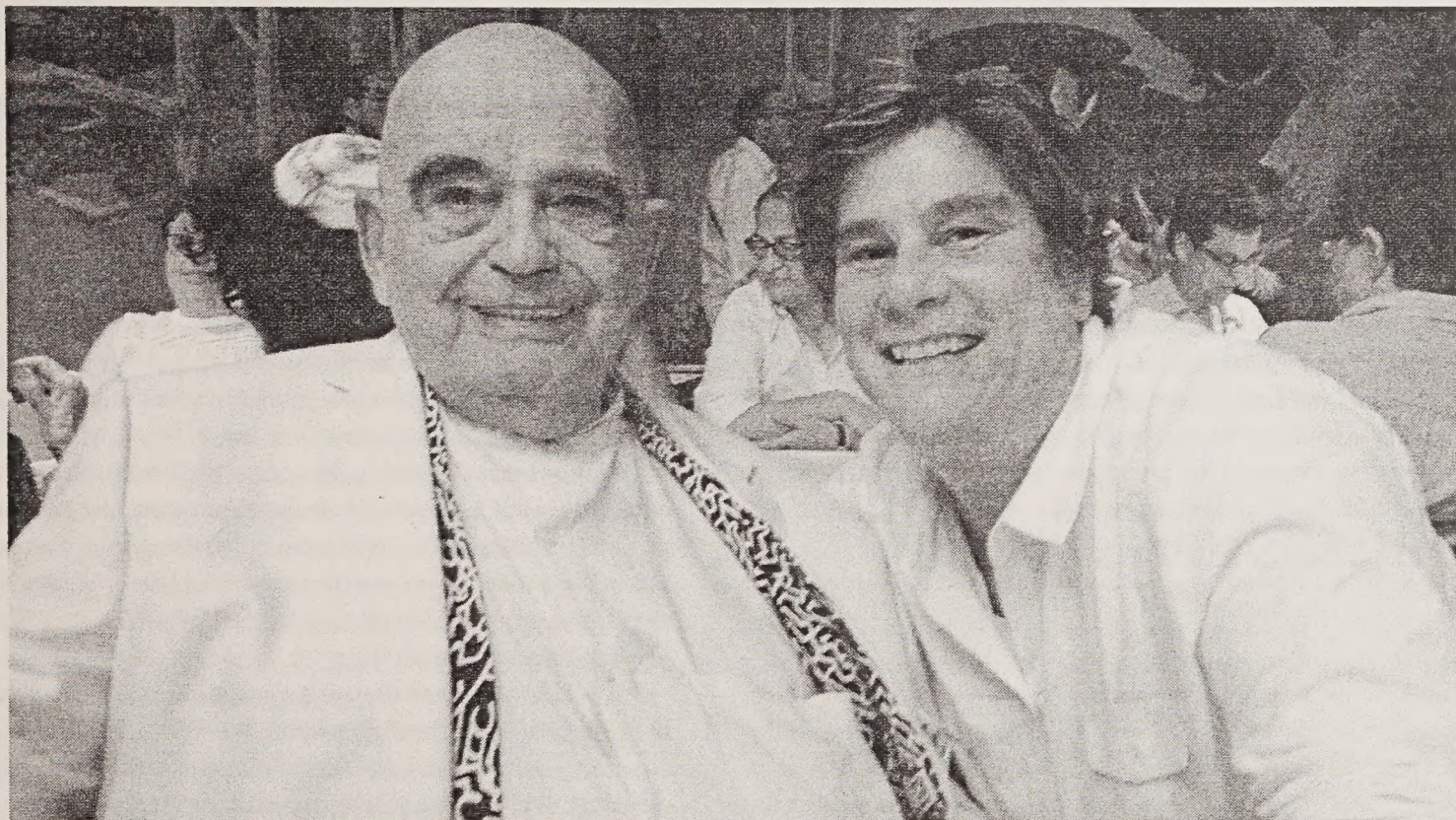




The Jewish

Gaily Forward

Cheshvan+Kislev+Tevet 5775 ■ November+December 2014



Ess–Fress (Eat–Eat A Lot) –thanks to Walter Leiss

BY IRENE OGUS

Is the memory of the delicious High Holy Days onegs still with you? Are you still craving that herring in sour cream, those apples and honey, that chocolate rugalach?

Each year—for as long as any of us can remember—we have enjoyed an Erev Rosh Hashanah oneg and a Yom Kippur break-fast that attracts the eye and sates our appetites. A volunteer crew lovingly prepares and presents this amazing cornucopia. The High Holy Days Oneg Chair Judith Wolfe orders the food, often many weeks in advance, and every year Walter Leiss, our beloved longtime member, pays for it. It costs \$7,000–\$10,000 to provide this feast and many volunteer hours go into the preparation.

Walter gives this money so graciously and takes great

pride in our congregation. As many of you know—and as he is the first to admit—his health is not good these days. He wants our oneg tradition to continue even after he is no longer with us. To make sure this happens, he has established the **Walter Leiss High Holiday Oneg Endowment Fund** with a generous donation to kickstart the Fund. His wish is that others will begin to donate to this fund so that his legacy will be assured for many years to come.

On his behalf, I am asking you to please consider making a contribution to this Fund. It can be a one-time amount, a monthly amount or an annual amount. The Fund is managed by the Jewish Community Federation Endowment Fund and checks can be made to “Congregation Sha’ar Zahav–Walter Leiss High Holiday Oneg Fund” and sent to the Sha’ar Zahav office.

So—*kindelach* (children)—ess, fress—enjoy—and—donate!

Celebrating Siddur Sha'ar Zahav



MA'ASEH *sh'hayah*, "it once happened," that a group of three Jews—two secular and one religiously knowledgeable—who knew themselves to be gay, decided to organize a gay, Jewish gathering for Shabbat. It was San Francisco and the year was 1977. With the backdrop

of the 1960s, the sexual revolution, feminism and the civil rights movement, bringing together a group of gay Jews for Shabbat seemed like a compelling idea. Little could these men have imagined that they were at the forefront of liturgical innovation. But gathering for social and communal purposes didn't seem that unusual. The original conveners couldn't have predicted that their efforts would bear fruit, not only for themselves, but for future generations.

In 1982 our first siddur appeared and since then we have continued the tradition of creating liturgy that reflects who we are. With many thanks to my predecessors—Rabbis Alan Bennett, Yoel Kahn and Jane Litman, the beta version of our siddur existed when I arrived in 2000. It took us another ten years to move from the beta to the printed version and in those years, one of the challenges I realized that we faced before we could actually publish our siddur was the issue of obtaining legal permissions. Leslie Kane came to the rescue and spent a year securing those permissions. In the midst of seeking out permissions for some of the poems and pieces that had become favorites, we began creating writing opportunities, thanks to Maggid Andrew Ramer, and soliciting more contributions. We needed something uniquely Sha'ar Zahavish to justify the choice to publish our own siddur. Martin Tannenbaum chaired the hugely successful fundraising campaign and over fifteen congregants or families made major gifts to make the publication possible. Michael Tyler chaired the Siddur committee and served as editor-in-chief, along with Leslie Kane. Jo Ellen Green Kaiser was the project manager as we moved toward publication. Many, many other congregants edited, proofread, wrote poems, prayers and text, or contributed art and photography for the project. Cindy Steinberg, a friend of our member Richard Meyerson, designed the book itself.

I am inspired to believe that change for the better *is* possible each time I hold this heavy prayer book in my hands. Sha'ar Zahav's elegant, "homemade" siddur represents the creativity of

gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender, heterosexual and queer people, giving voice to our tradition's ancient words and sanctifying the contemporary realities with new poems of praise and petition.

When I experience people of all ages and backgrounds encountering the words in our prayer book, I witness what is, for me, a corrective to the historically Jewish (Judeo Christian) damnation of same-sex erotic desire and relationships. *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* intersects sexuality and liturgy and offers us a language for living our complicated lives with passion and an attitude of thanksgiving.

It was particularly gratifying to me that our member Ira Hirschfield assisted us in obtaining a grant from the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund to publicize and market our siddur internationally, as well as at colleges, graduate schools and professional associations here at home.

Most poignantly, during the congregational trip to the Jewish community in Cuba, when I attempted to present a copy of *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* to the lay leader of the Havana community, he showed me that a copy was already on his bookshelf and he told me that he used it to help young teens think about their sexuality in a positive and Jewish way.

One of my hopes in the years ahead is to be able to continue to bring *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* into other communities around the country—colleges, prisons, hospitals, multi-faith centers and alliances. We have a treasure trove full of the most gorgeous crown jewels. I want to be sure others have a chance to find themselves in our liturgical mirror and embrace.

Friday evening, December 12 at 7:30 pm will be a celebratory Shabbat evening honoring every hand and heart that contributed to the legacy of our siddur—come and let us honor you as we give honor to our siddur.

As part of the evening's celebration, I have invited Professor Marc Dollinger, the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Chair in Jewish Studies and Social Responsibility at San Francisco State University, to give the sermon. He will reflect on his perspective as an American Jewish historian, focusing on the meaning and impact of *Siddur Sha'ar Zahav* in our day and age.

It is my hope that you will join us for a spiritually uplifting Shabbat and anniversary celebration.

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Congregation Sha'ar Zahav is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism, the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews, and the San Francisco Organizing Project



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Our Transition Year



HIGH HOLIDAYS have just ended and, for me, it was an amazing start to the New Year. Attending services with you for Yom Kippur was just what I needed. I had been in Cleveland for Rosh Hashanah because my brother-in-law recently died.

While in Cleveland it was my job to support my family. I never had the opportunity to feel supported until I came home. During my time away, you had sent cards and notes, emails and phone messages. When I arrived at services, so many of you offered words of comfort. In the face of a devastating loss for my family in Cleveland, my family at CSZ helped to keep me going. Thank you for your support.

There are many kinds of losses that we all suffer throughout our lives. I was a notetaker for the inaugural Listening Campaign meeting on Yom Kippur, and in my group I was reminded of the emotional toll the upcoming departure of our beloved rabbi is having on many congregants. We decided to start a Listening Campaign to ensure that everyone's ideas and voices are heard. The Va'ad wants to allow as many congregants as possible to express their hopes and dreams for our future. Equally important is providing a safe space to allow congregants to express their feelings as we move into this transition year. I hope you had a chance to participate in one of the sessions; if not, there's still some sessions in early November.

We understand that some of you would prefer to have private discussions with leadership. Many of you have already shared your thoughts and ideas for our future with me. I appreciate it. If you weren't able to attend a Listening Campaign meeting, or if you want one-on-one time with leadership, feel free to contact me or any other Va'ad member to set up a time to talk.

In this transition year, we are exploring our rabbinic needs and possibilities for the future. We are blessed to have the opportunity to take the time to do this in a thoughtful way because Rabbi Angel will continue as our rabbi through June 2015. At the Leadership Advance last July, we discussed many ideas about Rabbi Angel's final year, as well as the years to come. We identified a set of initiatives related to this transition period. These include:

- Honoring Rabbi Angel
- Developing a new vision for rabbinic leadership

- Exploring strategic collaboration with other organizations with that share our values

We also identified two additional key congregational initiatives:

- Making the best use of our building
- Using social media for marketing and outreach

I will continue to provide regular updates about this process in future *Jewish Gaily Forward* articles. If you are interested in participating in one of the initiatives, please let me know. If you have other ideas, please share these with me at llowesf@gmail.com.

Transition years are uncomfortable. That process of being betwixt and between leave me feeling ungrounded. I hate change and this year will be a challenge for me. With the support of this community, I have faith that we will emerge focused and strong. May this year be a year of strength for our CSZ community.

The Return of the Amazing CSZ Kugel Nosh Down

Support Children's Education Programs at Sha'ar Zahav!

Sunday, December 14, 3:00-5:00 pm
Advance tickets \$25/ door \$30

We are so excited about the return of our great kugel adventure, with exciting new entries, guest judges and, of course, delicious kugel. Win prizes, eat fabulous and creative kugel, hang out with friends while supporting children's education programs at Sha'ar Zahav.

For information about how to enter your kugel or if you have other questions: kugelnoshdown@gmail.com

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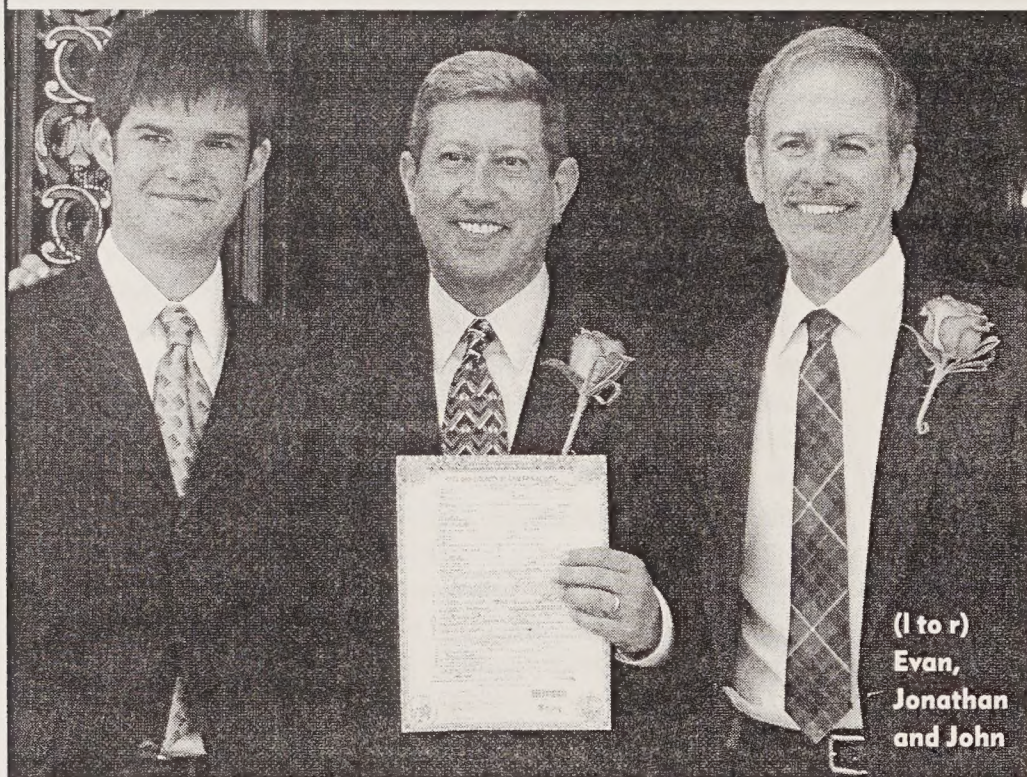
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Volume 33, issue 3

That's So Gay



BY EVAN ARNOLD-GORDON

*Our congregation has historically been in the forefront of recognizing diverse family structures. Our own long-time member Jonathan Funk and his spouse of thirty years, John Arnold, have a son Evan, who is currently a college senior majoring in journalism at the University of Oregon. Evan has written about his experiences growing up in an alternative family, including an op-ed piece about his dads that appeared in *advocate.com* in April 2014. At the newsletter committee's request, Evan recrafted the article for inclusion in the *Forward*, but due to space limitations, we can only present excerpts from his story here. The entire piece can be found on the Sha'ar Zahav website <http://shaarzahav.org/article-archive/>*

Excerpts from "That's So Gay"

I am standing on the steps of City Hall in San Francisco, Jonathan on one side of me, and John on the other. It is August 15th, 2008 and after 24 years of a domestic partnership, the State of California is finally recognizing my fathers' marriage. Other gay and lesbian couples are here too, celebrating what they only had dreamed possible....

Given how proud I was that day, why then was I so embarrassed by my alternative family? Why did we have to be so different from the families that come with picture frames?... My biological father, John, lived in Davis and commuted to Sacramento while my other father, Jonathan, worked and lived in San Francisco. One of my dads' favorite stories is of the three of us walking past a storefront television in the Castro district of San Francisco when I was about 5 and me yelling, "Hey, that's Mary Martin!" This flabbergasted and amused the people around us who came up to my dads saying, "What have

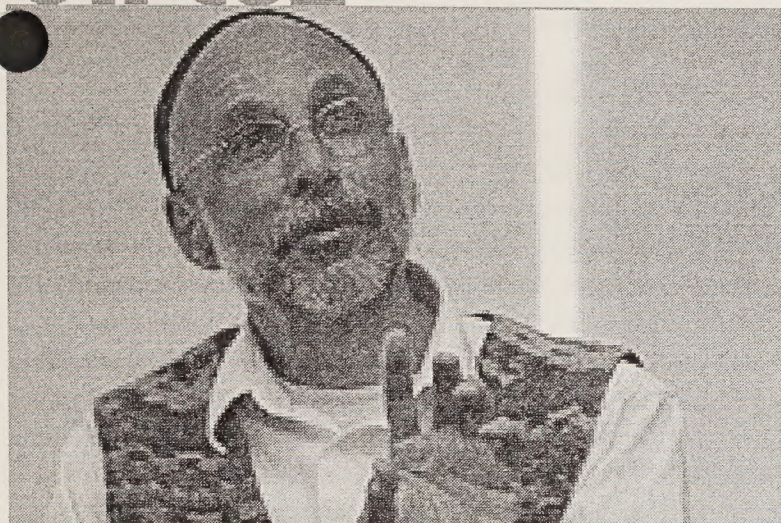
you done to this poor child?!" My mother Nina also lived in Davis and commuted to Sacramento.... My parents always tell me they were trailblazers, going to parenting classes and having to explain their respective parental titles. Being an only child has its perks such as being my parents' pride and joy, however at times it also feels as though I'm part of a whimsical, comical theatre that has never rehearsed before.

The hardest part is the burden it puts on me. I didn't ask for this; why couldn't I have a straight couple for parents? A family I could bring a girl home to and not have to explain how the whole dynamic works.... If anything my parents love me too much, I am their creation and they have told me when they first came to realize who they truly were they couldn't have dreamt society would allow them to have a child. I have always had these internal discussions with myself and the older I get the more I realize I wouldn't trade my unique life for anyone's in the world....

Although my biological father is not Jewish, Jonathan is, and from time to time we would go to services at his synagogue, Sha'ar Zahav. I can remember the unique Kaddish prayer that was chanted which also included gay, lesbian and transgender people who have been lost or who struggle with society that tells them being different is wrong. Another night when I was quite young, Jonathan was leading Rosh Hashanah services and for the last song, John brought me onto the bimah so Jonathan could hold me in his arms while we both sang. My dads have also celebrated anniversaries at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav including their 25th. It was very comforting knowing there was a synagogue that not only accepted my family but also acted as a safe haven for many others. Through going to services in San Francisco I not only learned more about Judaism but also that the only thing that truly matters in a person is if they have a good heart....

My parents being gay put a burden on me, I felt existentially as though I were gay. However, burdens can oftentimes end up being a blessing and in my case, I am extremely blessed.... But then I think to myself, you wouldn't have a story to tell, Evan. Of all the stories I know about our family, including the flight attendant bumping my dads and me up to first class because she "loved our family,"... there is one story that truly stands out for me and really makes me smile. A few years ago when I was a teenager, my dads and I were getting off the subway in San Francisco. As we're about to get off we saw two men holding hands with their eight or so year old son who was standing between them. We immediately smiled at them knowingly, and as we walked past, my dad proudly nodded at me and said to them, "This is what you have to look forward to."

Our Legacy Community On CSZ



BY ANDREW RAMER

Getting involved in a synagogue wasn't even remotely on my mind when I moved to San Francisco a dozen years ago. When my housemate, who I've known since I was twelve, invited me to go with him to services on my first Friday night here, I didn't want to go and didn't like the service. I white-knuckled my way through it, reading and rereading the hand-out, where I saw that there was Torah study in the morning, which appealed to me. Nicole Bloom was facilitating and I liked the discussion she led—but I didn't stay for the service.

I returned the next week and the week after that. When Dev Noily, the regular facilitator, came back, we made an instant connection, and I kept coming, but never stayed for a service.

Slowly, Dev walked me through my resistance to Jewish prayer, by showing me the ways that I could translate/transform the parts I found objectionable, although she had to literally hold my hand the first time I stayed for a service. As an post-Zionist, Goddess-worshipping Jew with a decades-old Buddhist sitting practice and a strong spiritual engagement with the Sufi tradition, there was little that appealed to me in the siddur, but there was something comforting about being able to bring the gay and Jewish aspects of myself together in one room. In fact, over time, being in our community has been a powerful healing experience for me, a healing of the alienation and damage from my early Orthodox and Conservative childhood.

Slowly I made friends who are now family. Slowly I found my own queer Jewish voice in our community. When Dev went off to rabbinical school, I took over facilitating Torah study for two and a half years. It helped that I have a rusty degree in Jewish studies, and a lifelong interest in Jewish texts. My involvement in the assembling of our new siddur, as writer, editor, writing workshop leader, even artist, was another level of healing. In addition, I've mentored thirty b'nei mitzvah students who were writing their drashes—and if you'd told me when I moved to this city that I would be doing any one of these things, in addition to working with Paul Cohen, Rose Katz and Ora Prochovnik in our Journey Judaism program—I would have laughed in your face!

I still mourn the absence of female Hebrew for every prayer in our siddur, and I'm still not crazy about the colors of the sanctuary. As progressive Jews in a progressive region, I wish that ours was a more public voice of criticism of the reactionary elements of the state of Israel, regarding women and non-Orthodox Jews, and not just around Israel and Palestine. But, we are growing in our own diversity, and I like that. In a time when fewer and fewer Jews are joining synagogues, I think that we have something to offer our city and region that is worth cultivating, which is why I have put CSZ in my will, as an investment in the future of a rich and diverse Judaism, and in support of future cranky Jews like me who will kvetch their way toward nurturing engagement, as we welcome and include them.

To Be a Jew

BY JEFFREY LILLY

Perhaps it was the day,
a day after the beginning,
but yet a beginning,
the day that first I
a Jew deeply felt,
and with this
sudden knowledge
came an accepting sense
for whom I had secretly been
and was becoming.
There was a moment
of slight terror,
a boggy stepping in,
an unwanted gatekeeper there,
and then bravely onward
was I drawn,
adoring the Hand
which is my distant Home,
the Presager of being
that led me
to first candle's winter's lighting
there in Union Square,
I standing
with a sea of companions,
waiting in joyous expectancy
for the continuance.



Introducing the B'nei Mitzvah

Zachary David Weber Fineberg



Zachary David Weber Fineberg (aka Zach Fineberg), son of Julia Weber and Charles Fineberg, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on November 15. Zachary lives in Bernal Heights and attends San Francisco Community School in the Excelsior. He likes to play sports. He's a member of his school's track team, plays basketball, and does parkour around San Francisco. Zachary loves animals, especially his rescue lab mix, Bailey. This summer, Zach attended his favorite sleep away camp, Camp Winnarainbow, with lots of friends from all over California. He also had his first job as a counselor-in-training at Camp Edmo where he enjoyed working with 2nd and 3rd grade campers.

Zachary has a magnificent palate and loves eating all the fabulous food San Francisco has to offer. His favorite restaurant is Yank Sing. Zachary is also a great cook. One of his favorite dishes to make for his friends and family is Siracha Scrambled Eggs, a dish he created to spice up his mornings.

Zachary has been playing drums since he was three years old and loves listening to and creating music. He is an avid reader and especially enjoys dystopian novels.

Zachary is looking forward to his bar mitzvah and is very appreciative of the teaching, guidance and great snacks provided by his mentor Martin Tannenbaum, as well as the help

of Rebecca Weiner and his other teachers and friends.

Serena Stein



Serena Stein, daughter of Helen Bruno and Kevin Stein, is a 7th grader at Roosevelt Middle School. She will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on the auspicious date of December 13, 2014 (12.13.14!).

Serena has fun on the Roosevelt track team, where she runs the 400 meters. She also enjoys skating on her pennyboard, listening to music, hanging out with her friends, and snuggling with her dog, Ginger.

For her tzedakah project, Serena volunteers at the SF Marin Food Bank, helping to package food for families who rely on the Food Bank so they can survive in our expensive Bay Area.

Serena follows in the illustrious footsteps of her brother, Cohen, who had his bar mitzvah service two years ago, and who continues to help out Rebecca Weiner at Beit Sefer on Saturdays.

The Stein Brunos have kept to our pledge of not having a bar/bat mitzvah unless Merle Malakoff is our child's mentor. We are deeply grateful to Merle and Gina for this tutelage and their friendship.

Serena would also like to thank her other teachers and mentors, Beth Ross, Rebecca, Rabbi Angel, Cantor Bernstein, and all those who have supported her over the years since she was in the baby havurah!

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Talmud Yerushalmi, Hagigah 1:7

TEACHERS ARE the backbone of any good school. Teachers bring the heart and text and the ability to inspire our students. I feel very lucky to have wonderful teachers again at Beit Sefer that inspire and educate our students. Our teachers always put in the extra time and devotion so their classes are filled with stimulating Jewish content and joy. If you are not already a Beit Sefer family, please come by and visit our school. If your child is already enrolled at Beit Sefer, spend some time getting to know our wonderful teachers.

Noa Gravesky—Ge'avah Teacher K/1

Noa has been passionate about social justice and Judaism for as long as she can remember. After she graduated from Harvard University she realized that though these two parts of her life were expressed in different communities, they exist inextricably within her. She started searching for and nourishing communities that live and breathe Judaism, queerness and justice. She worked as the Director of Community Organizing at Progressive Jewish Alliance in the Bay Area,

supporting her Jewish communities to live their values more fully through education, activism and community building. Committed to Jewish education and youth empowerment, she has worked with young folks locally at several synagogue schools. Noa seeks to make Judaism and justice relevant, personal and fun for kids of all ages! Noa enjoys her time going to graduate school to study Expressive Arts Therapy, working as a healer, making art about feelings with 6 year olds in the Tenderloin, listening to the stories of her Jewish elders, feeling energized by the brilliance of the young folks she learns and plays with, and writing love poems to the trees in the Mission which inspire her with their resilience.

Martin Rawlings-Fein—Kehilla Teacher 4/5

Martin has studied at Hebrew College in Boston, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the Alliance for Jewish Renewal (ALEPH) Beit Midrash. As an out bisexual trans man, he is a queer community documentarian and filmmaker. He contributed to the 2011 Lambda Literary Award-winning anthology *Balancing on the Mechitza: Transgender in Jewish Community*, and writes a column for the Examiner.com website about San Francisco Judaism and LGBT issues. At Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer, he expands young minds and teaches Jewish studies to 4th and 5th graders

(continued on page 10)

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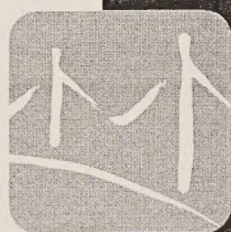
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Latkes Anonymous

BY IRENE OGUS

When I'm selecting recipes from CSZ's cookbook *Out of our Kitchen Closets*, I try to find one that was submitted by a current member.

However, I love this latke recipe – but I have no idea who Lillie is or was!

So, this recipe comes with a challenge. Do you know who the mysterious Lillie is?

Enjoy!

152 VEGETARIAN

LILLIE'S LATKES

3 medium potatoes
1/4 onion
1 to 2 eggs
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup butter or margarine

Serves 4 to 6

45 minutes to prepare

Lillie from Hollywood

My great aunt Lillie was the kind of person the more staid members of Jewish society politely referred to as "a Real Character." She lived in Hollywood in a building right behind the Chinese Theatre. When, as a kid, I went to Los Angeles to visit relatives, one of the highlights would be a walk with Aunt Lillie down Hollywood Boulevard, where she would note, with obvious delight, the diversity of her neighborhood. Her favorite targets were, of course, the gays. "That's Florabelle," she'd say in an Ethel Merman kind of voice that could be heard in Pasadena. "Look at the way she swings that *tukkus*." When the walk was over, there was still another treat: Lillie's latkes, which she grated by hand and cooked with love.

- Grate potatoes by hand through the smallest holes of the grater (no food processor). It should be thick and soupy.
- Grate about three to four tablespoons of onion, also through the smallest holes, and add to the potatoes.
- Add the eggs, flour, baking powder, salt and pepper and mix thoroughly.
- Melt the butter or margarine and fry to golden brown over medium heat.
- Serve hot with apple sauce, sour cream, and/or the preserves of your choice.

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Marc Lipschutz in memory of Kenneth Carlson.

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Allan Berenstein in memory of Louis Radovich, Rabbi Ben Marcus & John Goleboski.

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Diane Green in memory of Kenneth Carlson.

Susan Tubbesing in memory of her grandmother Laura Bezman & cousin Phyllis Cohen.

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Gabriel Lampert in memory of his mother Ann Lampert & aunt Reba Kirshner.

Randy Weiss in honor of Shoshana & Andrea's wedding.

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Lydia & David Zinn in memory of Albert Seeman.

Merle Malakoff in honor of his son Max Malakoff.

Robert Katz

Cantor's Discretionary Fund

Sharyn Saslafsky in honor of Andrea Guerra & Shoshana Levenberg's wedding.

Shoshana Levenberg & Andrea Guerra in honor of Cantor Sharon Bernstein.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Jonathan Funk in memory of Judith Newman.

Mark Pressler in memory of Charlotte Goldsmith.

Memorial Plaques

Marion Trentman-Morelli in memory of Batya Kalis.

Thanks to our High Holy Day fundraising and membership pitchers: Allan Gold, Julia Weber and Kendra Froshman!

August 8-9

Flowers sponsored by James Carlson in memory of his mother, Jan Tuzzolino.

August 15-16

Flowers sponsored by Allan Berenstein in honor of Cantor Sharon Bernstein. Oneg sponsored by Yo Schneeman in celebration of her retirement.

August 29-30

Flowers sponsored by Michael Chertok

in honor of his parents, Barbara and Harvey Chertok.

Friday and Saturday onegs sponsored by Alice Harron in memory of her mother Bernice Kahn Harron.

September 5-6

Flowers and oneg are sponsored by the Rubenstein-Markiewicz family in honor of Evan's welcoming into the Covenant.

September 12-13

Oneg sponsored by David Lowe in memory of his husband, Daniel McGoldrick.

September 19-20

Oneg is sponsored by Marius Greenspan in memory of his father, Earl Greenspan.

September 26-27

Flowers sponsored by Barbara Cymrot in memory of her mother, Bette Cymrot.

Meet Our Teachers

(continued from page 1)

through multiple learning modalities, and emphasizes Jewish feminism and pluralism in content.

Ro Seidelman—Kadimah Teacher 6/7

Ro is a graduate of Wesleyan University living in Oakland. Ro organizes the queer community around economic and racial justice, makes giant puppets with children and loves to cook large meals for friends. Ro has also taught at Temple Sinai of Oakland.

Ila Cherney—Hebrew Teacher

Ila has been on the faculty of CSZ for more than 20 years. She has been involved in Jewish education in Chicago and San Francisco, and in Jewish professional life at the Jewish

National Fund in Jerusalem during her eight years in Israel, as a synagogue executive director in New York and San Francisco, and, most recently, as a recreation coordinator at the Jewish Home in San Francisco. She has served the Jewish community in some capacity for the better part of the past fifty years.

Amirah Mizrah—Hebrew Teacher

Amirah Mizrah is an Oakland-based educator, poet, translator and comics artist. Her work as a Jewish educator is rooted in her experience as a queer, Mizrahi, immigrant woman, which drives her intention to create loving and affirming space for her students of all genders and cultures. She has been in Oakland for almost two years now, and is glad to be a part of the CSZ community in addition to her work teaching at Kehilla Community Synagogue. South Tel Aviv is her home and it is always in her heart.

The Tikkun Middot Project: Anavah and Savlanut

BY MARK PRESSLER

Can we quantify growth in character within—and through—community? That is the aim of the Tikkun Middot Project in which CSZ is participating along with 28 other congregations from across the country as you learned in the September/October *Jewish Gaily Forward*. In this issue, I would like to make it personal and focus on the first two middot (soul traits). *Anavah* (humility) and *savlanut* (patience) were the first two traits I studied. Working systematically on and with them, using the time-tested practices of Mussar, I changed my work life for the better.

Three years ago when I joined my current company, I had no boss; I was alone and did things my way. Then my new boss was hired. I rebelled against her new procedures, experiencing them as taking away my autonomy. I was not kind to her, and the tension between us created a divide in our relationship—one that made me unhappy and made us less effective.

I went to the middot of humility and patience.

In Mussar, humility is defined as taking up the right amount of space at any given time. In my relationship with my new boss, I was taking up too much space. Using the techniques I learned in my study of Mussar, I meditated and I journaled. I realized that if I gave my new boss the space to do her job, then I might be happier in mine. I decided to reduce the space I was occupying. I let go of my ego for a bit and tried something new. I approached my boss with a question, but stood away from her for a bit and imagined a circle of space around me. I then reduced that circle of space which in turn enlarged hers. I then walked up to her and began my discussion. By reducing the space I took up, I gave her the space she needed, we had a great discussion, and broke through the barrier that I had erected.

Back at my workspace I felt happier but I found myself still

annoyed and critical, and still wanting things my way (personal growth is neither easy nor quick), so I went to the second middah: patience. I meditated and journaled, and used another component of the practice, repeating a phrase. To choose a phrase, one can draw from the tradition, from liturgy, from literature or from one's own experience. The phrase I chose was "her way is not my way, and that is ok." (I like to rhyme.)

Now, I had two middot to use and techniques to assist me. The next time I went to her, I reduced my space and began our discussion. As she spoke, I felt my impatience growing and became aware that I was barely listening. I went back to my desk and this time I began to repeat my phrase to myself as a meditation—"her way is not my way"—and I began to see that she had something to say even if I disagreed. I did it her way and, lo and behold, I had a good result. I was happier and, more importantly, she and I now had a partnership. She now comes to me for advice and I go to her as well.

Is character growth measurable? I am still not sure, but for me it is real. I have experienced a measurable change at least in this one relationship. By making significant personal changes, I know I will be more prepared to continue the work of the greater tikkun olam, repair of the world.

Musar-Tikkun Middot with Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

Study the middah of the month. Classes are free
and registration is not required.

7:00 pm

November 10 *Anavah*, humility

December 15 *Savlanut*, patience

Welcome to New Members:

Herbert Felsenfeld and Gail Newman
 and Irene Friedman, Noah,
 Ben & Zoe
 Justyn Grove
 Tamara Little
 Inessa Miranski
 Joan Rosen
 Elliott Sprehn and Rachel Nancollas

Our condolences to:

James Carls on the loss of his
 brother, Kenneth Carlson.

Sharyn Saslafsky on the loss of her
 friend, Doug Wright.

Rob Tat on the loss of his aunt, Lois
 Peal.

Patricia Lin on the loss of her friend,
 Caroline Cox.

Martin Rawlings-Fein on the loss of his
 uncle, J.W. Ashford.

David Zinn on the loss of his uncle,
 Albert Seeman.

Kathy Simon and Yannai Kashtan on
 the loss of their wife and mother, and
 our member, Inbal Kashtan.

Shai and Boaz Garcia-Goldberg on the
 loss of their grandfather, Mike Daarud.

Ina Turpen-Fried on the loss of her
 great-aunt, Hilda Bondi.

Laura Lowe on the loss of her brother-
 in-law, Michael Greenwald.

Member Yahrzeits

November

- 3 Forrest Kincade
- 7 Donald Albert
- 11 Bruce Apter
- 11 Matthew Rostoker
- 12 Dr. Richard Wright
- 13 Harvey Levine
- 16 Chuck Norton
- 18 William David Holt II
- 22 Tristano Palermino
- 27 Harvey Milk

December

- 4 Marilyn O'Keeffe
- 9 Isa Leah Cymrot-Wu
- 9 Nicholas Papadopoulos
- 18 David Glassberg
- 20 Norman D. Kramer
- 21 Walter Palmer
- 22 Elijah M Silverrod MacLachlan
- 28 Phyllis Mintzer
- 29 Allan Craig

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Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

Cantor Sharon Bernstein



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Celebrate the Holidays at CSZ!

**Multifaith Thanksgiving Service of Praise,
Prayer & Song from our many faith traditions:**

Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist

Tuesday, November 25, 7 pm

**Co-hosted by Congregation Sha'ar Zahav
and the First Mennonite Church of San Francisco**

In honor of Thanksgiving, join with members of many faith communities to celebrate in ritual, song and prayer, giving thanks for the many blessings in our lives.

We will be collecting donations for the San Francisco Food Bank during the service. The most needed items are canned vegetables, soups, stews, fruits, tuna and meats, peanut butter, and cereal. (No glass containers or perishable items please!)

**Chanukah Community Candle Lighting and Celebration
Friday, December 19, 7:30 pm**

Bring your Chanukiah, pour light into the night, get down with songs by Adam Sandler and Tom Lehrer as well as other Chanukah song favorites, and latkes yourself into fried food heaven.